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GROUP 3600

Attorney Docket No. 2000009

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Michael T. Dobbertin and
Henry P. Mitchell, Jr.

Serial No. 09/688,001

Filing Date: October 14, 2000

For PULSED AIRKNIFE CONTROL
FOR VACUUM CORRUGATED
FEED SUPPLY

Examiner H. Grant Skaggs

Group Art Unit No. 3651

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

In response to the office action mailed on November 1, 2001:

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida et al in view of Jantsch et al. Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35

U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida et al in view of Jantsch et al, and further in view of Watkiss. Applicants respectfully submit that for the following reasons, claim 5 is not obvious by Yoshida et al in view of Jantsch et al under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) and claims 1-4 are not obvious by Yoshida et al in view of Jantsch et al and further in view of Watkiss under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and further examination of claims 1-5.

In his rejection of claim 5, the examiner states that "Yoshida et al shows in Fig. 34 the timed operation of a vacuum belt feeder which includes first opening a vacuum valve 13 (at c) and a positive pressure air valve 22 (at a), closing the pressure air valve (at b), driving the belt feeder (14), closing the vacuum (at d), and then turning off the drive belt." Applicant respectfully submits that this is in error. Figure 34 in Yoshida et al does not show a positive pressure air valve either opening OR closing, what it does show is the position of the positive pressure air valve switching from position a to position b. The applicants respectfully request the examiner specifically cite where in the reference the positive pressure air valve closes during normal operation. The examiner cites Jantsch et al solely for the choice of a feed clutch as a known means for controlling the movement of the belt. Therefore, since neither Figure 34 of Yoshida et al nor Jantsch et al discloses the positive air pressure valve closing, Claim 5 is not obvious by Yoshida et al in view of Jantsch et al under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a), and applicants respectfully submit that rejection of claim 5 on this basis is in error, and request that the rejection on this basis be withdrawn.

The examiner states that it would be obvious to have the positive air pressure from valve 22 of Yoshida et al delivered in pulses as made obvious in Watkiss. As discussed above, Yoshida et al does not disclose valve 22 closing at all, merely switching position from position a to position b. It would not be obvious to combine the pulses from Watkiss into Yoshida et al, since Yoshida et al counts on the constant flow of positive pressure air, only in different directions, to separate sheets from the stack. Applicants respectfully request examiner to

disclose the motivation to combine these references. Because there is no motivation to combine these references, in fact the function of Yoshida et al would seem to teach against it, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-4 are not obvious by Yoshida et al in view of Jantsch et al and further in view of Watkiss under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a), and applicants respectfully request that examiner withdraw the rejection on this basis.

Examiner further states that with regard to claims 2-3, "merely having the air pressure separator (at a of 22 of Fig. 34) of Yoshida et al actuated at the same time as the vacuum is actuated (at 13 c of Fig 34) would require mere choice or expedience since the apparatus of Yoshida et al could work equally well with this type of timed operation". Applicants respectfully request the examiner provide a factual basis for the statement that having the air pressure separator of Yoshida et al actuated at the same time as the vacuum is actuated would require mere choice or expedience so applicants can adequately respond. In the absence of such, applicants respectfully submit that rejection of claims 2-3 on this basis is in error, and respectfully request rejection on this basis be withdrawn.

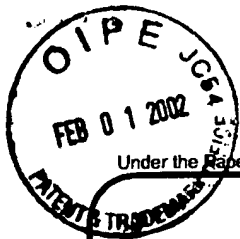
Examiner further states with regard to claims 3 and 4, that "to have the time between the closing of the valve 22 (at b) and the activation of the feed belt 14 of Yoshida et al to be approximately 50 milliseconds would require mere choice of expedience based on the timing of the feed rate of the sheets being fed". As discussed above, the valve 22 in Yoshida et al does NOT close, but merely switches position from a to b. Applicants respectfully request examiner to cite a factual basis for the statement that the time between the closing of the positive pressure air valve and the activation of the feed belt of 50 milliseconds is a "mere choice of expedience" so that applicants may adequately respond. In absence of this, applicants respectfully submit rejection of claims 3-4 on this basis is in error, and applicants respectfully request the rejection on this basis be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-5 are allowable as written, and request that the rejections against them be withdrawn.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathleen K. Bowen, Esq.
Registration No. 42,352
Attorney for Applicants



02-04-02

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PTO/SB/21 (08-00)

Approved for use through 10/31/2002. OMB 0651-0031

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| Application Number | 09/688001 |
| Filing Date | 10/14/2000 |
| First Named Inventor | Dobbertin |
| Group Art Unit | 3651 |
| Examiner Name | H. Grant Skaggs |
| Attorney Docket Number | 2000009 |

Total Number of Pages in This Submission **4****ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)**

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| Firm or Individual name | Kathleen K. Bowen |
| Signature | <i>Kath K Bowen</i> |
| Date | 02/01/2002 |

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| Signature | <i>Kath K Bowen</i> | Date | 2/1/2002 |

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